

Testimony in Support of
H.B. 5349: An Act Concerning The Inclusion Of CPR and AED
Training In The Public School Curriculum
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Good afternoon, my name is Meaghan Maguire and I am a seventeen year old senior at Ellington High School. I am an Emergency Medical Responder and the president of Ellington Rescue Post 512.

Being a freshman in high school is not considered "old enough" in many ways. Not old enough to drive. Not old enough to serve in the army, or legally make our own decisions. Not even old enough to have a job.

But do you want to know what I did at age fourteen? I took an "EMR" class in my town, passed a written test given by the State of Connecticut, and passed practical exams. During that class, I was required to be CPR trained as well as have about 50 hours of additional medical training to qualify as an Emergency Medical Responder. Then, at the age of fifteen, I started riding on the ambulance in my town. I started delivering patient care to those in my community that were in need. As a seventeen year old, I'd say that I have accomplished a lot. I have been a part of a team that has saved many lives as their job. Being part of the Ellington Rescue Post has allowed me to see and feel a lot of things that most people are never able to experience in their lifetime. I've seen somebody hit by a car, somebody who had overdosed, little kids hurt.

Under the Ellington Rescue Post 512, I have learned so much. Most importantly, it's taught me that I'm not too young to save a life- and really, nobody is.

From my standpoint, I believe that teaching teenagers how to perform CPR would be invaluable. CPR is a lifesaving skill, and the earlier that it is performed on a patient, the better their chance at survival is. Timely CPR is crucial because the loss of brain function begins only minutes after the onset of cardiac arrest. Learning to perform CPR is not hard, and would be easily understood by any high school teen. Anybody is capable of learning and performing CPR, and if put into the position, they should be able to make their own decision whether they should take action to help and save a life. With the proper teaching, students will be allowed to make their own decisions, and as a result, more and more lives will be saved.

So what can we do when we are fifteen, sixteen, seventeen years old? We can learn. We can practice as we learn. And we can grow. We may not be old enough to legally make our own decisions, but we, as young adults, as students, as citizens, count on our lawmakers to put in our hands the tools to better the world we live in. Requiring CPR as a lesson in all school and incorporating it into the lesson plans in health classes is a great idea and will, in time, save lives and better our community.